

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T ABUJA 001956

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/10/2015

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#) [NARCOTICS](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: NARCOTICS

Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for Reason(s):
1.5 (b),(d)

REF: Lagos 1427

1. Summary: On October 7, I raised with the NDLEA Chairman, the Attorney General of the Federation and the Principal Secretary to the President Nigeria's apparently flagging performance in narcotics interdiction. Reaction ranged from denial -- the NDLEA chairman said our data about arrests and interdiction was wrong or incomplete -- to deep concern by the Attorney General, who seemed to understand fully the importance of the narcotics certification process to Nigeria and the bilateral relationship. End Summary

2. On October 7, Dr. Bello Lafiaji, Chairman of the Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) called on me to invite me to his book launch on October 10. I took the opportunity to raise concerns that there have apparently been no major arrests in Nigeria for narcotics trafficking since 2001 and no major narcotics seizures (over 50 kilos) in the same time period. I commented that U.S. authorities were concerned about the increased flows of heroin into our country and that arresting this disturbing trend had become a high priority for us. I also raised the issue of Nigeria's narcotics certification, and the need to provide convincing evidence to Washington agencies of Nigeria's efforts, especially against major traffickers and large shipments. Bello showed that he was fully cognizant of the certification process. NDLEA Chairman for the past five years, Dr. Bello flatly denied there had been no major arrests or significant narcotics seizures since 2001. He defended his agency's performance, asserting there have been arrests, prosecutions, and convictions of narcotics traffickers during that period. He promised to provide detailed reports thereof. As for narcotics seizures, he explained significant ones had occurred, but many of them had taken place outside of Nigeria, yet as a result of Nigeria's interdiction efforts.

3. Later the same day, the British High Commissioner and I called on the new Attorney General, Bayo Ojo to signal concern about Nigerian counter-narcotics efforts. I repeated what I had said to Bello: our information indicated no major arrests for narcotics trafficking nor major narcotics seizures since 2001. The British High Commissioner said his government's information matched ours. I added that, when I raised this issue with the NDLEA Chairman, Bello had responded that our information was incomplete and promised to send me accurate data. I raised the certification process, with which Ojo was familiar, and promised to pass to him the latest counter-narcotics benchmarks for Nigeria once the benchmarks were ready. The High Commissioner and I expressed concern about the volume of narcotics apparently passing through Nigeria. The British High Commissioner said there was evidence of corruption within the NDLEA (Reftel). The Attorney General appeared to understand fully the seriousness of what we said. He asked for a report with specifics about corruption within the NDLEA, and said that he, too, would request from the NDLEA data on arrests, prosecutions, convictions and interdictions since 2001. He said he would present his findings and any information we provided to President Obasanjo.

4. (S) On October 7, I called on Steve Oronsaye, Principal Secretary to the President, to go over the same narcotics concerns. He took careful notes, and said he would be in touch with the Attorney General. He, too, was fully aware of the certification procedure and said he would welcome receiving the benchmarks as soon as they are ready.

5. (S) Comment: By way of these meetings the relevant senior Nigerian officials, save for the President himself, have been put on notice that we (and the British) are giving Nigeria's counter-narcotics performance close scrutiny, and that genuine progress in targeting major traffickers and toward interdicting large shipments will be a cardinal factor during the next evaluation of Nigeria's narcotics certification.
CAMPBELL